

CSCE NEWS RELEASE

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe

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Co-Chairs Call for Greater NATO Enlargement as Commission Releases *Report on Human Rights and the Process of NATO Enlargement*

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Washington, DC—Commission Chairman Sen. Alfonse D'Amato (R-C-NY) and Co-Chairman Rep. Christopher H. Smith today called for more inclusive enlargement of NATO.

D'Amato called the expansion of NATO “the most important foreign policy event for the United States since the fall of the Soviet Empire. Security, freedom, democracy and prosperity for the roughly 200 million people living between Western Europe and Russia are at stake,” he said. “I strongly believe that NATO enlargement serves America’s interests in maintaining peace and stability in Europe. We should invite all candidate nations that meet the standards to join NATO. I believe Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovenia, and Romania should be given invitations to negotiate for inclusion in NATO at the Madrid Summit. ”

Co-Chairman Smith said, “The Madrid Summit must also put in place a genuine process to ensure that all emerging democracies desiring NATO membership will be considered for membership as soon as they meet the established criteria. Last week the House approved legislation—which I helped draft—underscoring the importance of having such a process at the outset. Platitudes by the Clinton Administration cannot substitute for such a process. The West would commit an injustice of historic proportions if we miss this unique opportunity to embrace those countries of the region demonstrably committed to democracy, human rights and the rule of law.”

D'Amato's recommendation for NATO expansion comes as he announced the release of the Commission's *Report on Human Rights and the Process of NATO Enlargement*. The report, based on

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The Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe by law monitors and encourages progress in implementing the provisions of the Helsinki Accords. The Commission, created in 1976, is made up of nine Senators, nine Representatives and one official each from the Departments of State, Commerce and Defense. For more information about the Commission, please call (202) 225-1901.

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hearings held by the Commission and direct testimony from the Ambassadors of candidate countries, found Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Romania and Bulgaria in substantial compliance with their OSCE human rights commitments.

On June 12, President Clinton said that only Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic should be extended invitations to join NATO at the Madrid Summit.

“The Administration’s plan should be expanded to include Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovenia, and Romania,” said D’Amato, “NATO is still a military alliance, and this limited enlargement would leave the expanded alliance militarily vulnerable.”

The complete version of the Commission’s report is available at its Internet Website: <http://www.house.gov/csce/>